AMENDMENT S TO THE CLAIMS:

Prior to the present communication, claims 1, 7-11, 13, 14, 17, 18, and 21-24 were pending in the subject application. Each of claims 1 and 11 has been amended herein and claims 17, 18, and 21-24 have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 1, 7-11, 13, and 14 remain pending. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for diagnosing ulcerative colitis by testing a fecal sample for an elevated level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies, the method comprising:

obtaining a fecal sample from a person presenting with inflammatory bowel disease;

determining whether there is an elevated level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies in the sample compared to an anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibody level in a healthy sample, wherein an elevated level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies is indicative of ulcerative colitis; and

diagnosing the person with anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies present in the fecal sample with ulcerative colitis.

2-6. (Canceled)

7. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

diluting the fecal sample.

8. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 7, further comprising:

contacting the fecal sample with neutrophil cytoplasmic antigens to create a treated sample.

9. (Original) The method as recited in claim 8, further comprising:

contacting the treated sample with polyvalent antibodies to human immunoglobulin to create a readable sample.

10. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 9, further comprising:

determining an optical density of the readable sample at 450 nm, wherein the optical density corresponds to a level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies in the sample.

11. (Currently Amended) A diagnostic assay for diagnosing ulcerative colitis ~~differentiating between ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease~~ by determining whether a fecal sample contains an elevated level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies, the assay comprising:

obtaining a human fecal sample from a person presenting with inflammatory bowel disease;

diluting the fecal sample;

contacting the diluted sample with neutrophil cytoplasmic antigens to create a treated sample;

contacting the treated sample with polyvalent antibodies to human immunoglobulin to create a readable sample;

determining the optical density of the readable sample at 450 nm; and

determining whether the optical density indicates an elevated level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies compared to an anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibody level in a healthy sample, where an elevated level of anti-neutophil cytoplasmic antibodies is an indicator of ulcerative colitis.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously Presented) The diagnostic assay as recited in claim 12, wherein the anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies are one of IgG, IgE, IgM, IgD, IgA_{sec}, IgA, and combinations thereof.

14. (Previously Presented) The diagnostic assay as recited in claim 11, wherein the assay is selected from a group consisting of an enzyme-linked immunoassay and a lateral flow membrane test.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)

18. (Canceled)

19. (Canceled)

20. (Canceled)

21. (Canceled)

22. (Canceled)

23. (Canceled)

24. (Canceled)

25. (Canceled)